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the requirement that the park be named in honor of his father. We understand, instead, that Mr. Latsch himself desires the park to be named in honor of Nicolas Perrot, the famous French explorer, who passed the winter of 1685-86 a short distance down the river from Trempealeau Mountain and within the confines of the new state park. The fine modesty and sense of historical appreciation displayed by Mr. Latsch in thus desiring to honor the intrepid explorer require no words of commendation at our hands. We may express the hope, however, that when a future state legislature shall come to the task of bestowing a legal name on the park, it will possess a like degree of judgment concerning the historical fitness of things. Perhaps Mr. Latsch might insure this in advance by making the gift of the land to the state dependent upon its acceptance of the name of Perrot for the park.

FOREST FIRES, GENERALLY AND IN PARTICULAR

From the beginning of Wisconsin's development until the close of the nineteenth century, lumbering constituted one of the chief sources of the state's wealth and business activity. In 1860 the lumber industry, still in its infancy in Wisconsin, ranked second only to agriculture in importance. The story of its rise and decline constitutes one of the most important and thrilling chapters in our history as a state. In this respect our history conforms to the general rule that in every new country the natural resources closest at hand are the first to be exploited. Well had it been for state and nation had our lumbermen, in their mad rush to transmute our magnificent forests into gold, paid more regard to the welfare of future generations and squandered less recklessly this splendid "gift of the ages."

This statement of these reflections brings us to the point of suggesting the broader historical significance of Mr. Bracklin's article in the present number of the *WISCONSIN MAGAZINE OF HISTORY*. One of the prolific factors making

for the waste of our lumbering resources was fire. In the words of a recent writer this was "the dread scourge of the lumber industry." The sawmills and sawmill towns, flimsily constructed of inflammable pine, were periodically swept by the flames. Although the mills and mill towns were commonly rebuilt with characteristic American vigor, the forest fires were the source of appalling loss to the state. Yet the public mind was for many years indifferent to these losses, and the fires were commonly left to burn themselves out, with no human effort to impede or check the course of the flames. In 1864 one of the greatest conflagrations which had ever visited the state swept for weeks through the northern pinery regions, yet so indifferent were the people of southern Wisconsin to the matter that it received scarcely any notice in the newspapers of this section.

Our numerous forest fires, then, have possessed not only thrilling human interest but vast economic significance. Mr. Bracklin's narrative describes a single personal experience with one small forest fire. What he experienced and here describes, however, applies with suitable variation of details to hundreds of similar events in Wisconsin. In this fact consists its broader significance.

CONSOLATION FOR THE PRESENT CRISIS

It seems evident, from the sources of information at our command, that the Imperial German Government counted largely on its ability to neutralize the national will of America by fostering among Americans of German descent a spirit of disloyalty to their country. That the citizens of the Badger State in particular could thus be cajoled into playing a traitor's rôle was not only believed in Germany, but widely feared in our own country as well. That our citizens of German descent should be enthusiastic about going into the war was not reasonably to have been expected; that, faced with a hard duty, they should prefer to play the rôle of